

## [Evan Jones Walker]

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Folkstuff - Pioneer [?] Words

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Mrs. Gussie Hale, P.W. Pioneer Experiences UVALDE COUNTY, DISTRICT 10

EVAN JONES WALKER

Uvalde, Texas

Evan Jones Walker was born December 4th, 1856, in Washington County, Arkansas. He came to Graceland County, Texas, in the fall of 1864. James G. Walker and Temple Leech Walker were his parents, and his father was a Methodist preacher and a doctor.

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Mrs. E. G. Walker was Nancy Harris and was born in 1868 in the community of Oak Island, twelve miles south of San Antonio. Mr. and Mrs. Walker have three children, who are Maurice, Harold and John.

"I was five years old during the Civil War, but I remember once back in Arkansas, during the war, there was seven jail hackers come into our house and stood my father up in front of the fire place, with several guns pointing in his face. They were going through the house and carrying out everything they wanted, and we children were screaming and crying to the top of our voices. Finally, my father called for the captain and told him he had a protection or pass from General Blunt, which he offered to the captain. But the captain claimed to be a Penn Indian and could not read English and asked my father to read it for him. After my father had read it, the soldiers brought back everything they had taken from the house. And I want to state that that was the only house standing in that part of the country next morning. All you could see was the chimney to a house and an apple orchard. The Yankees had burned them all.

"I remember an old man named Freshour.

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He was old and deaf and he was walking along and the Yankees came up behind him and hollered at him to stop. Of course he did not hear them and they shot him in the back and killed him. My mother and some more ladies had to dig a grave and bury him, for my father and two brothers who were home on a furlough had already gone back to the Southern Army. There were no other men in the country. My two brothers were also home the night the Yankees raided our house, but they were hid up in the attic while the Northern soldiers were there.

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"On this same raid they went into the home of two of my uncles and took them out and hung them to their own gate post. They were both big men and were my mother's brothers.

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My mother was there and saw it all and as long as she lived she never got over the shock. I don't know why they called it a civil war, I think it was the cruelest war we have ever had. We lived right on the line between the North and South and could often hear both cannons firing. I had five brothers in the Southern Army right in the thick of the fighting and not one of them was ever wounded.

"After I came to Texas, I would go back to Arkansas with my half-brother after loads of apples. One night we were camped in the Indian nation in Oklahoma. We had just finished eating supper when a man rode up and my brother asked him to get down and have supper. While he was getting off his horse he showed a six-shooter in his right hand. My brother hastened to the wagon and come back with a six-shooter buckled around him. Well, nothing happened but my brother stayed up all night and guarded the horses. Of course he sure kept out of the light. I slept but he said he could hear them whistling around all night. He said they wanted to steal his horses and he always said I saved his life. They would have killed him but they didn't want to kill me because I was a child. The highjackers were not hard boiled then like they are 3 now. They were not modernized then for they had just as soon kill a child now as a grown-up.

"On the way back with the load of apples we had crossed the Red River and we struck quicksand in the bar and bogged down to the axle. Of course we had forded the river. Well, my brother went off to get help and while he was out, a bunch of Yankee soldiers came. Right there I got the scare of my life, for I had had one scare of Yankee soldiers and they talked me into giving them all the apples they could do anything with. But when they saw my brother coming they vacated.

"Another time we were coming back from Arkansas and my brother had a store and two residences in San Marcos on the San Marcos River. So just as we got there we discovered the residences were on fire. I was standing close to my brother and I was wearing a Yankee cap. Well, he looked around at me and saw me standing there with that

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Yankee cap on and he jerked it off my head and threw it in the fire. I believe he would have whipped me if another brother had not interfered. Anyway both houses burned down.

“When my father first came to San Antonio to preach there was only one Methodist church in town and they only paid him \$400.00 a year. He preached there two years. While we were in San Antonio, it came a big hail storm. I'll bet some of those stones weighed five or six pounds. I never saw such hail. One neighbor said a stone went through his tin roof and come on through and knocked the head out of a flour barrel in the kitchen. It knocked all the blinds off the windows where it struck.

“Just before we went to San Antonio the city was quarantined on account of cholera and they said the people died in bunches with it. One time they were taking a man to the cemetery to bury him. They had the coffin which was homemade in a wagon and a pair of mules hitched to the wagon. Well, the mules got scared and run away and threw the [?] on the street and busted it open and the man came to and got up and [?] back home.

“I came to Uvalde on my birthday on December 4th, 1834. I had land in Uvalde to start all over again.

“The biggest business houses here then was F. A. Piner Company and A. C. Piper Hardware, T.J. Starkey Grocery store, G. H. Cunningham and Brothers, General Merchandize, Doctor S. M. Applewhite's Drugstore and Talley Brothers grocery store. Talley Brothers were the first to start a delivery wagon in Uvalde. He kept a bell on the horse and everybody knew where John Talley was.

“L. Schwartz was on Main Street then and I believe his place of business is the only one that had kept it's original name on down through the years. The old man had a big heart and sympathized with the widows and orphans. I have put/ up many an order for them that he gave , as I was clerking in his store at the time. Yes he always helped poor people and

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that kind of giving come from the heart. He was sure a generous old man and ready to help those in need. I clerked for him nineteen years.

“Old Man J. J. H. Patterson had one of the best drygoods stores in town when I first come here, down on East Main Street.

“Peter Breish was another one that was here and had a drygoods and notion store. Vieth and Gus Miller was here in the store business together and was located about where Ennis Hooper is now, but later moved to where Horner's store is now located. And I want to say every house in this town was made of lumber. All sidewalks, if any, was made of plank and you could hear a man step on it for a quarter of a mile.

“My friend Gus Bowles was not in business when I first came here. I guess he heard I was coming and left. But I won't tell what I know about that. Anyway we could always tell when Gus Bowles was in town; you could hear him laugh for two or three blocks.

“Old Man Bill Davis was here when I come her here and had a Meat Market on Market Plaza, which is now Music Plaza. And on the corner where the Manhattan Cafe is now — we used to call it Barnhill corner — was a funiture store owned by Mr. Revell. Well, it caught fire and/ as everything was made of lumber and it burned all the way down to where Uvalde Drug Company is now. And the reason it stopped, there was a little rock house there then. In between the two corners was two residences, Sheriff Rob and T. B. Revell lived in them. But everything burned up.

“George Horner acquired the A. C. Piper Hardware and it was located about where Bill Evans Jewerly store is now. And N. L. Stratton was postmaster here then and the post-office was right about where J. C. Penney is now.

“The Hesperian, the Uvalde paper, was edited by a man named Smith and J. C. Crisp succeeded/ him with the paper. And I believe the office was located about where the Masonic building now stands.

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"Joe Doughty was in business on the corner of East Main where Taylor's filling station is , next to Nelson's barber shop. Hatch and Burris had a drygoods store down on the south side of West Main. And Oliver Dampier had a place of business (a saloon) back of where Smyth's store is now. A. M. Rice had a saddle shop right in the same block. And L. M. Thomas was a shoemaker and he had his business close to where Rice had his saddle shop.

"Mrs. Henry Mertz and Reverend L. D. Shaw were put in two of the first graves that was put in the new cemetery. I helped to bury them both. L. D. Shaw succeeded my father as pastor of the Methodist Church in the fall of '85. In those days it was customary for a preacher to preach at one place just one year and then someone else took his place.

"My first job when I first came to Uvalde was to work in Applewhite's 6 drugstore. Dr. Applewhit Applewhite had the first telephone here. It ran from his home to his Drug Store. It was a funny looking thing, you didn't ring it you knocked on it when you wanted to call someone. It didn't have any battery I don't know what it had, I guess the noise just went down the wire.

"M. Moke was on East Main Street and had a store close to Schwartz. Pier Guyon had a blacksmith shop here and he was also in the undertaking business where the bottling works is now. And the trees that are there now were planted by him.

"On East Main Street Mrs. Fredrich had a store and it was run by her two sons Willis and Adam.

"Mrs. Walker and I were quietly married September 6th, 1884 right here in Uvalde in a little house right where the new undertaking parlor is now. Reverend L. T. Morris, pastor of the Methodist Church, performed the ceremony.

"After I left Dr. Applewhite I went to work for Cunningham in his grocery store on East Main Street and there were two saloons close by. After I had been there a few years I moved

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over to the Starkey building and went into the store business with J. H. Nipper, but in 1896 I sold out. After that I clerked at different places. One place was for Moyer.

“In 1902 I began work for L. Schwartz and as I said before I worked there about nineteen years. I quit work there in '21.

“I opened my last store in May 1923, but on account of age and ill health I sold out in August 1936. But during that time I made lots of friends and would see them most every day. I miss them greatly now.”

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